The Theosophical FORUM

NOVEMBER 1901

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ISSUED MONTHLY

VOL. 7 NO. 7

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CHARLES JOHNSTON, Flushing, N. Y.

Entered at the Post Office at Flushing, N. Y., as second-class matter, April. 20, 1901

THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM

VOL. 7. NOVEMBER, 1901 No. 7

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"There are two states of this Brahma; one with and one without shape; one perishable and one imperishable; which are inherent in all beings. The imperishable is the supreme being; the perishable is all the world. The blaze of fire burning on one spot diffuses light and heat around. So the world is nothing more than the manifested energy of the supreme Brahma: and inasmuch, Maitreya, as the light and heat are stronger or feebler as we are near to the fire, or far off from it, so the energy of the supreme is more or less intense in the beings that are less or more remote from him. Brahma, Vishnu and Siva are the most powerful energies of God; next to them are the inferior deities, then the attendant spirits, then men, then animals, birds, insects, vegetables; each becoming more and more feeble as they are further from their primitive source. In this way, illustrious Brahman, this whole world, although in essence imperishable and eternal, appears and disappears, as if it was subject to birth and death."

Vishnu Purana.

THE PERSONAL DEVIL.

I have many times been asked whether Theosophy recognises the existence of an external personal God, in the sense in which that term is used in orthodox Christianity: and I have been obliged to answer in the negative, owing to the fact that Theosophy is a most reasonable system of thought. Personality means limitation and limitation cannot be ascribed to the Infinite.

It is not often, however, that we have enquiries concerning a personal devil: perhaps because the satanic being of popular belief has become too discredited of late years to be worth enquiring about.

But there *is* a personal devil; in fact there are many personal devils—so very personal in fact that we shall not have to go very far to find them.

In saying this I do not refer either to Satan or to his army of assistants. These and the orthodox conception of a personal God go together. I refer to something with which we are much more intimate, to our own familiar—enemy.

The old idea of the devil was that he had an objective existence outside of man and that his continual occupation was to thwart the good purposes of God and the progress of the Divine Kingdom in the hearts of men. Now it is evident that the essential nature of a devil is not at all in his objectivity, but in his occupation. And altho' we might perhaps describe that occupation in more philosophical terms, yet we may for practical purposes accept this definition of it—to thwart the Divine purposes and the progress of the Divine Kingdom in our hearts. If we can find in ourselves something that is thus occupied we can very properly call it a devil.

Now one of the greatest services that Theosophy has rendered is to help us to understand the principles of our own construction, to know ourselves, according to the command of the ancient oracle.

Man, according to the Theosophical philosophy, is essentially a Soul, a spiritual being, which existed long before the body it now inhabits, and which will continue to exist when that body has been dust for ages. That Soul is a spark of Deity.

(It must of course be understood that in this description we are

using a language which is admirable for commercial and scientific purposes, but very deficient in terms relating to the Spiritual nature. This is evident when we find that the word "Spirit" is used for both God and Gin!)

The Soul is the Son of God, the Christos principle, the Divine Spark, part of that Energy which supports this world and every other.

It is the business of the Soul to attain to self-conscious expression of its own divine nature on every plane of being.

You and I are all, in the real innermost parts of our nature, Spiritual beings, Souls, Sons of God, one in essence with the Over-Soul or Deity.

But we are not yet able to express fully this essential divinity of ours. We are here on earth for the very purpose of so training our minds and bodies that they will be able to respond to the energies and impulses of the higher nature and thus become fit instruments for the expression of the Soul's melodies.

We have been at this kind of thing a long, long time, as men count time; but not a long time in the immeasurable life of the Soul, to whom a thousand years are as but a day.

In the endeavour to carry out our task we have often been in this world before and no doubt we shall often come here again; and before the foundations of the earth were laid the Soul was actively engaged on its quest in other spheres.

For our present purpose we can divide the planes of being, on all of which the Soul has to attain to self-conscious expression, into three. Of course we can divide them into many more planes when we want to make a more detailed study, but the three-fold division will suffice.

First of all and most familiar is the plane of our animal nature, the plane of sensations, and of our objective form. It is the plane of the physical man. This plane, which we may call the physiological plane, is so well known to us that I need not deal with it more particularly.

Then there is the plane of our psychic nature, the realm of being that our modern science of psychology is concerned with. It is the plane of our passions and our intellect. Reason and de-

sire dwell here. It is the mental man: the plane on which our minds dwell.

Above and beyond these two there is the plane of the Soul itself. We are not so familiar with this spiritual plane as we are with the psychological and physiological planes; but still we are quite aware of its existence, for it is the plane of ideals, of noble thoughts and aspirations. From this plane comes the mysterious voice of conscience. It is the plane of wisdom and compassion.

On its own plane the Soul is a very different being from the Man as we know him. Our highest ideal of the greatest man we know or of whom we can yet conceive does not nearly approach the reality of the Soul: for it is the Shrine of Deity itself.

As I have said, it is the destiny of this Majestic Being to express its own nature on all planes. We are to become divine men on earth. We are divine already on other planes and we are to become divine here. Even now we have many an inkling of our divinity. "Like only appeals to like: if it were not so how could we appreciate the revelations of those great teachers who call forth an answering response from the silent and unsounded depths within us. Every mighty line of Shakespeare, every majestic strain of Handel, every spirit-moving phrase of Mozart or Beethoven, every giant pencil sweep of Michael Angelo, every gracious touch of Raphael or Bellini, is included in our own being waiting only the means of expression."

We are all Christs, Buddhas, Krishnas, Platos, but lacking, as yet, the perfect minds and bodies which those great ones possessed.

When we have attained to that expression of ourselves through the minds and bodies that we are (or should be) even now engaged in perfecting, then will the Kingdom of God be on earth and the Divine Will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Now what is it that spoils our efforts; that has for its continual occupation the thwarting of this Divine purpose, this progress of the Divine Kingdom?

It is the personal devil of each of us. And that personal devil is not a horned beast with cloven hoofs and forked tail which tempts us to commit specific acts. It is much worse than that. It is the *erroneous idea of ourselves* that is more or less in full possession

of our minds. We are, in this respect, our own devils. Occasionally, rarely, flashes of spiritual light reveal us to ourselves as we really are and the Divine power is manifested in us: but for the most part we are listening to the voice of our devil and according to our moods are either mournfully declaring that we are miserable sinners and that there is no health in us; or that we are the kings of creation, the supreme product of evolution, lords of the universe. In both cases the fiend smiles with great satisfaction.

If we sort ourselves out a bit and get a clear view of the devil and his characteristics, and of the real man and his characteristics, altho' we shall still fall under the devil's sway to some extent and for some time to come, we shall have taken the first step to his ultimate expulsion; or rather disappearance, for, as said, he is only an idea, though a most dominant one.

I propose therefore to notice a few of his devilish peculiarities so that in future, when we think and feel and act under the compulsion of this, at present, dominant idea, we shall be able calmly to look at that action, emotion, or thought and recognize that it was not initiated by our real selves, but was the work of the devil in us. And when we come to recognise this foreign idea compelling us to action for which we are fully responsible, but which do not at all conform to our real purposes in life, we shall certainly begin to take steps to assert our own mastery over these minds and bodies of ours, these instruments of thought and action which we have taken such a long time to build.

Taking then our highest and most luminous ideal of the Soul and its divine nature and powers as our standard, taking its purposes as the real purposes of our lives, let us go over our notions of ourselves and *our* purposes in life, and find whether the two are consistent.

We must remember that the Soul is fully conscious of its own immortality: it knows its own connection with that which is beyond time and is subject neither to change nor end. It knows its own power and wisdom. It knows its oneness with the Creative Power and its part in the Creative work. It knows its essential unity with all other souls. It knows the Law that reigns eternal and supreme. It knows its own destiny: knows that its work and

Nature's work are one. It knows that right action is right whatever the result. It knows that the rightness of an act is in the act and not in the benefit that accrues either to itself or others. It knows that reaction follows action infallibly and that the due results of action accrue to the doer.

Do *our* acts and thoughts bear this light upon them? Let us take a few items from our daily record.

Do we think and act as immortal beings? Are we not assured that we were born and will soon die and that we must get as much as we can out of this universe for ourselves while we are here? The personal devil convinces us that this is so. Do we find sufficient motive in the exercise, for the sake of the work itself—no matter what the work may be—of the divine creative power inherent in all of us? How often do *we* work without the hope or thought of reward, without an eye to the result as it shall effect ourselves, or those nearest and dearest to us who are but extensions of ourselves? Do we find the rightness of an action a complete motive for doing it? How much have we done in all our lives of which we can truly say: this was absolutely free from self-seeking, from expectation of reward; reward, in the shape of gold, of the admiration of others, or the admiration we secretly or openly bestow upon ourselves—what we call feeling good, or clever, or kind. All such biased action, all such thought, is inspired by our personal devil. He solemnly assures us that we should be fools to work for nothing—how often have we heard that phrase, as though any work could be for nothing in a universe governed by law. No pay, no work, is his devilish basis for action, and he tells us that if we can get for ourselves a little, or, better still, a good deal more reward than the action deserves, if we can make a profit in fact, then we are very clever indeed and will be sure to get on in the world.

I think if we look around we shall find that nearly every trade, profession, or art, is under the triumphant sway of the devil, to the entire exclusion of the Soul. Take one instance. How many lawyers work with the sole aim of assisting the administration of justice irrespective of the fees? But we all know that lawyers are specially connected with the devil! Take another. How many

so-called builders of houses work for the pure love of building houses, of providing needed shelters for their fellows? If we were to suggest to the Society of Master Builders that this was the real business of a builder and that his work as a builder was quite independent of anything he was going to make out of the job, we should be greeted by a shout of laughter—from throats owned by the personal devil.

Do we think and feel and act as if we and all others were one in essence as if we were members of a Universal Brotherhood, which is the expression of that unity on earth, of that fundamental fact in nature which every religion has insisted upon, since religion began?

Does not the personal devil assure us that the struggle for existence and the survival of the most devilish is a law of nature? "Surrounded on all sides with other people like ourselves we are impelled to make our personal devil triumph over theirs; to prove to ourselves and them, but most to ourselves, that our personal devils are so much wiser and better and stronger in every way than theirs." And for this purpose we invent creeds and sects, parties and factions, codes and conventions, so that we may fight, judge, condemn, and even "lawfully" destroy others; and in any case prove to our very great pleasure that the others are so much worse, so much more foolish, and weaker than we are. And we retail to our friends, or rather our friends' devils, and often with embellishments to make sure of our case, the foolish, wicked, and weak doings of others, and the wise, virtuous, and heroic doings of ourselves—always to show the inferiority of the others, always to demonstrate the superiority of ourselves, not only in our virtues, but in our great cleverness in so accurately observing the other's villany.

When we think, listen to, or repeat anything derogatory about another or strut around blowing our own trumpets, we may know that our personal devil is in full possession.

And so we invent castes and nations. We divide our humanity into social layers and territorial sections. And we all fight and struggle and compete until the world is a seething mass of fighting units, mad devils all of us.

Do we think and act on the moral plane as if we knew that

rigid Justice ruled the world: as if we were assured that Nature's reaction brought about by our action was exactly the result we ourselves had earned, that we, as lovers of justice had in fact most desired? Are we not always complaining of the evils that others do to us: grumbling from the cradle to the grave, always meditating on how much nicer and better it would be if we had more money, or were somewhere else: or if someone we particularly disliked were removed hence?

All this kind of thing is the result of our devil's efforts to fill our minds with wrong thought. And how well he succeeds!

To take a last example from our store of items—do we feel that trust in great Nature which reason shows can never be betrayed, a trust which the Soul has, knowing as it does the purposes of Nature? Do we not rather wonder in a frightened manner where it all leads to: and what is to happen to us, especially *us,* in the great beyond. Do we not shrink from Great Nature's most beneficent boon—Death, in an agony of fear? Are we not ready to pay large fees to professors of medicine, and to eat and drink the vilest concoctions in the efforts to prolong existence in a worn-out body that has ceased to serve the purposes of Soul? That fear of death is our devil's trump card and he uses it when all else fails. By it he holds us at his mercy, in nearly every case.

These few items have, I think, given us a fair view of the satanic thing that dwells with us, ever delighting to thwart the purposes of Soul; and having thus got a notion of the nature of the personal devil and his works, two questions arise. How did the personal devil come into existence? What are best means to take to get rid of it?

We will take the origin of the personal devil first.

The Soul is able fully to express itself on its own plane: its destiny is to be able to express itself fully on all planes. For this purpose it must make for itself out of the substance appropriate to each plane, vehicles of expression: mental vehicles of mental stuff; physical vehicles of physical stuff. Now in the effort to produce these vehicles its spiritual energies have become, to some extent, entangled with the lower energies it is trying to control, and at times

its forces are overwhelmed by the grosser forces of the lower planes. Thus, in trying to create a mind body, while it has succeeded in its object so far, that mind body has got some very imperfect material, or rather uncontrolled energies, in it. This is of course a very natural thing to have happened and one that could not perhaps, in the nature of things, have been avoided. But the result is that through the action on the lower planes of the self-analysing faculty (which is originally derived from the Soul) this mind has come to attach the idea of Self or "I" to these uncontrolled energies, both mental and physical, and in doing so the real "I" or Self is lost sight of. Consequently we imagine ourselves to be limited beings, shut in by bodies: we even imagine we are the bodies themselves and talk such stuff as "I am hungry," "he hurt me," "I was insulted," "my clothes," "my house," and so on. Attaching the idea of self to various passional and intellectual energies, we find ourselves seriously discussing whether we have Souls or not! So the mind is filled with Egotism; and thus the foundation of the great error is laid. Looking outward through the subsidiary organs of sensation it builds on sensation an image of itself as a separate person, and, given the heresy of separateness, the rest follows.

So the uncontrolled elements in the Soul's bodies are the cause of the personal devil, and only when we have obtained full control over ourselves, meaning thereby over our various bodies, shall we have dispersed our personal devil.

What are the steps that we must take to accomplish this desirable end? Shall we gird our heavenly armour on, valiantly sally forth to battle, and with one terrific onslaught drive forth the enemy? I think we shall find it not quite so melodramatic.

The first step is to recognise as clearly as we can, the existence of the obsessing entity, and the next is, to turn our attention to our real selves, the Souls of each of us, and getting an idea of the nature of Soul, to assert to ourselves quietly and positively that we are spiritual beings, Souls, and therefore propose to think, and feel, and act as such, henceforth.

We shall begin by acting as we should suppose our higher selves would act, and we shall, in not a long time, be our higher selves acting. This is, I believe, the straight road to success. The

personal devil will often thwart us still, but we are eternal, and he is a temporary creation. Therefore we are bound to win if we persevere. And when the personal devil has had a temporary success, there is no need to cry about it: a wise warrior learns as much, if not more, from his reverses as from his victories; so we shall mentally repudiate the act or thought as not ours, not what we desired, and at once turn our attention to the Soul. Nature can be relied upon to send in the Bandar-log in due time so we need not worry. The personal devil derives much of its vital sustenance from attention, and it will, like Rudyard Kipling's Bandar-log, resort to many ingenious devices to get it. But knowing ourselves we shall be able to defeat its artifices and in due time, little by little, and in orderly course, our true selves will master all the elements of the lower planes and thus attain to the perfect expression of the True.

THE SEVEN RACES OF THE FOURTH ROUND.

THE FIFTH RACE OF THE FOURTH ROUND.

With the Fifth Race of the Fourth Round the elements now known arrived at their permanent state, and have a short period of rest before they are propelled once more on their upward spiritual evolution. (I. 543). We have as yet but glimpses of the fifth Element, "interstellar ether," which will predominate in the next Round, and which has more to do, we are told, with psychology than physics, (II. 135), because this Ether is that "Soul of the World" from which proceeds, and to which corresponds, human mind itself. (I. 13 *note*). As a Root-Race, therefore, we have crossed the meridian point of the balance between brain-intellect and spiritual perception, and are re-ascending towards the Divine, but our sub-races are at different points of spiritual progress, some far in advance, others far behind. And it is through the overlapping of races and sub-races, that in the Atlantean days of spiritual sin, the heaviest Karma of the Fifth Race was generated. (II. 300-2). All the later races have their *physical* origin in the early Fourth. But it is the sub-race preceding the one that "separated," that is to be regarded, we are told, as the *spiritual* sourse of our present generations, and especially of the Eastern Aryan races. (II. 165). Now the Fifth sub-race of the Third Race was the one that separated, (II. 715), so that would give the *fourth* as the sub-race in question, and this would bring us to the "Holy Race" of the early Third, before spoken of as "the Sons of Will and Yoga." These Divine Teachers of the Third Race re-descended during the third sub-race of the Fifth Race to impart spiritual knowlege to mankind.

The Aryan Hindu belongs to the oldest race now on earth; the Semite Hebrew to the latest. The one is nearly a million years old; the other, a small sub-race, about 8,000. Strictly speaking, the Jews are an artificial Aryan race born in India, and belonging to the same Caucasian division as the Armenians and the Parsees. The Western ethnologists agree with the Eastern in saying that of the seven primitive types of the Aryan Race (which was born and developed in the far north, but emigrated into Asia), there

now remain on earth but three, the Caucasian of Europe, the Mongolian, of Asia, and the Ethiopian of Africa. (II. 470-1, 768).

For the lowest races of men are now rapidly dying out. A process of decimation is taking place all over the globe among those races whose "time is up"—those stocks which esoteric philosophy regards as the senile representatives of lost archaic nations. Those who realise that every Root-Race runs through a gamut of seven sub-races, with their seven branchlets, etc., will understand the "why." The tide-wave of incarnating Egos has rolled past them to harvest experience in more developed and less senile stocks; and their extinction is hence a Karmic necessity. (II. 779-80).

The Fifth Continent was America, we are told, but as it was situated at the Antipodes, it is Europe and Asia Minor, almost coeval with it, which are generally referred to by the Indo-Aryan Occultists as the fifth. They follow the order of the evolution of the Races, rather than the modern geographical distribution of land and sea. (II. 8). But, it is hinted in many places, that the Aryan race came from somewhere in Northern America into India at a time when America and Asia were one continuous land. *Patâla,* the Antipodes, or the Nether World, (as America is called in India), was by far the senior of the Old World. (II. 446). And the subterranean dwellings of the Adepts of the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Races, generally surmounted by pyramids or collossal *menhirs* are found not only in the old world, but scattered all over the two Americas. (II. 352). The priests of Sais told Solon, (according to Plato), that their books preserved the records of a great nation, which emerging from the Atlantic sea, had invaded Europe and Asia. The *Secret Doctrine* teaches that this was the latest, seventh sub-race of the Atlanteans, already swallowed up in one of the early sub-races of the Aryan stock, which had been gradually spreading over the continent and islands of Europe as they emerged from the seas. Descending from the high plateaux of Asia,* where the two Races had sought refuge in the days of the agony of Atlantis, it had been slowly settling and colonising the newly emerged lands. (II. 743). And we find such start-

*The occult sciences show that the founders of the Root Races have all been connected with the Pole Star. II.768.

ling resemblances in the architecture, the traditions, the religions of the archaic European and American nations, that they must have had a common origin. And the fact that early generations of Adepts had made their home in both Americas, makes it the more fitting and the more possible, that the new School for the Revival of the Lost Mysteries of Antiquity should be established here. Besides that, Occult philosophy teaches that even now under our very eyes, the new race and races are preparing to be formed, and that it is in America that the transformation will take place, and has already silently commenced. (II. 444). Owing to the strong admixture of various nationalities, the Americans have in the course of only three centuries already become a nation apart, and they are, in short, the germs of the Sixth sub-race, and in some few hundred years more will become most decidedly the pioneers of that sub-race, which must succeed to the present fifth (or European) sub-race. In about 25,000 years the preparations for the seventh sub-race will begin, until in consequence of cataclysms which will one day destroy Europe and still later both Americas, the Sixth Root-Race will have appeared on the stage of our Round.

TABLE OF THE FIFTH RACE AND ITS SUB-RACES.

First Sub-Race.

Is saved with its sub-divisions of different colors; from the Atlantean deluge. (II. 351).

Second Sub-Race.

Initiates travel by *land* across what became later the Straits of Gibraltar and the British Channel, to supervise the building of menhirs and dolmens, colossal Zodiacs and places of burial. (II. 750).

Third Sub-Race.

Is taught by Third Race Adepts, *re-descended.* (II. 436).

Fourth Sub-Race.

Witnessed the destruction of Poseidonis, nearly 12,000 years ago. (II. 433).

Fifth Sub-Race.

Spoken of as our own, (II. 351, 435, 471, *note*).

Sixth Sub-Race.

Americans spoken of as germs of this sub-race. (II. 444).

Seventh Sub-Race.

Preparations the Sixth Root-Race must last throughout both these sub-races.

But the Fifth will overlap the Sixth Race for many hundreds of milleniums, changing with it, more slowly than its successor, but still changing in stature, general physique, and mentality, just as the Fourth overlapped our Aryan Race, and the Third the Atlanteans. (II. 445 and II. 147).

It is interesting to know that the Purânas allude to the pre-cosmic and pre-genetic periods, rather than to those of so-called creation, whereas the Bible, saying only a few words of the former period, plunges forthwith into material genesis, and while nearly skipping the pre-Adamic races, proceeds with its allegories concerning the Fifth Race. (II. 252).

The Aryan Race is now in its Kali-Yuga (or Dark Age), and will continue to be in it for 427,000 years longer, while various "family races," the Semitic, Hamitic, etc., are in their own special cycles. The forth-coming Sixth sub-race will be in its golden age, (Satya Yuga), while we reap the fruit of our iniquity in our Kali-Yuga. (II. 147).

OUR MOVEMENT.

6. The Preparation.

Having conformed to the condition, our mental equipment must be made ready. The ordinary mind, while untrained, is unable to receive the knowledge which is to destroy the cause of evil. The average man is not only ignorant, in the sense that he lacks wisdom, but he is doubly unfortunate, inasmuch as his mind is full of silly fancies, misconceptions, prejudices, erroneous convictions and unwisdom in general. His mind, which should be a House of God, is not merely void of the Divine presence, but has become a den of thieves. So he must purge the Temple and fit it to become the Temple of Truth. The money-changers and the traffickers must be turned out. His fancies, traditions, imitations, narrowness, and prejudice must go. Hardness and dogmatism must disappear. His mind must become fluidic, instantly responsive to the impulses of his higher nature. And it must be trained to interpret those impulses aright: his mind has to become the temple of a *living* God.

This training may be proceeded with in many ways, but one of the best preliminary preparations, one that enables us to *unlearn* most easily, is to study the world's religions and philosophies. Let us see why this is the best preparation.

Throughout the time that man has lived on earth there have been seekers for the knowledge of the real and amongst them there have been those who have reached the object of their search. And they have recorded their discoveries and have tried to pass on what they have learned, either in their own writings, or by teaching others who recorded what was taught. These teachers have lived in all lands and at all times and their teachings, which are found in every country and in every age, are embodied in the Sacred Scriptures and the classical philosophical writings universally treasured by mankind. And, though they are but fragments, they are, nevertheless, of the greatest service to us: inasmuch as they contain the message of those who have found that very truth which we must seek.

The preparation for the destruction of ignorance and the gaining of wisdom consists in the study of these old records. We must learn from them the direction of the path to knowledge taken by the truthseekers of old. We must unlearn the erroneous directions

which have been instilled into us by those who know not the way, who are blind leaders of the blind.

So the second aspect of the work of the Theosophical Movement is to promote the study of Eastern and other religions and philosophies and to demonstrate the importance of that study.

It is very necessary that our study should not be confined to one set of scriptures. Each age was best fitted to receive some special truth, and each of the teachers who arose in the past represented the spiritual flower of his age and gave expression to some great aspect of truth. We shall learn a very great deal by getting these aspects of truth together, and we shall unlearn a great deal more in the process. Moreover, each ancient record helps to explain what is difficult to understand in the others. And, whether they are Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, Zoroastrian, Tâoist, Egyptian, Indian or Chaldean, they are all mines of information on the nature, the origin, the evolution and the destiny of man.

An intelligent study of these scriptures will show that they contain descriptions of the mental and moral powers and forces in man which are as accurate and as scientific as, for instance, the descriptions of man's physical nature found in the best text books of anatomy.

Take this description of a man from one of the ancient Hindu books. It will be found to be a true, if metaphorical, description of the various aspects of his being.

"The body is a chariot, the bodily powers are the horses, and the external world is their field. The mind is the reins, the Soul is the charioteer and the One Self is the lord of the chariot.

"He who is ignorant, with mind not firmly held, his bodily powers run away with him, like the unruly horses of a charioteer. He is impure and gains not the place of peace.

"But he who is wise holds firm his mind; his bodily powers, like well ruled horses, do not run away with him: he has wisdom for his charioteer, he is for ever pure, and he gains the end of the path, the supreme resting place of the emanating Power."

This study will also show us that between real religion and real science there can be no antagonism, and that it is quite unnecessary for us to keep our religion and our science in carefully separated compartments of the mind. If religion is the intelligent knowledge

of man's relation to the Divine and the active use of that knowledge and science comprises all intelligent knowledge, there must be scientific religion and religious science. The wordy controversy which has raged between dogmatic Theology, posing as Religion, and dogmatic Materialism, posing as Science, is in no sense a conflict between true religion and real science.

7. The Esoteric Philosophy.

It has been stated above that the Movement was not intended to introduce any new doctrines, but to remind us of certain old teachings that have been forgotten, or are regarded as obsolete—teachings as to the relation of man to the Universe and of man to Humanity. The comparative study of the world's religions and philosophies shows that there are certain teachings in them which are universal, which are found in all. That universality is in itself very good evidence of their truth. These truths fit in with one another in a remarkable way and, together, form a complete philosophical system. And we eventually come face to face with a fact upon the significance of which we cannot lay too much stress. That fact is that all the religions of the world are based on one primary philosophy. In their origins all the varied religions sprang from the same source. The primary world-religion may be likened to the trunk of a tree. Its main branches are the chief religions followed by the various races of mankind, past and present. Its smaller branches are the denominations into which the chief religions have divided. Its twigs are the little churches and sects into which the denominations have split. The farther a sect is from the main trunk the less truth it contains. The nearer it is to its origin the truer it is. But who will be content with part of the truth when the grand main trunk can be seen?

To this world-religion, once the universal religion of all mankind, various names have been given. It has been called Theosophy, the Wisdom-Religion, the Sacred Science, Divine Wisdom, the Esoteric Philosophy. The last name seems most appropriate for the universal system because it denotes that it is something which underlies the exoteric systems. It is the heart of all Science, Religion and Philosophy.

And its universality need not surprise us. For the fact that

the Founder of every great religion based his teachings on the same underlying philosophy goes with another fact, namely, that every such Founder was a member of the Lodge before referred to, which is the Eternal Guardian of the Sacred Philosophy, keeping it pure and unchanged from age to age. The Teacher could but repeat what he himself had learned and what his predecessors had learned and taught before him; only emphasising some aspect of the philosophy which the world most needed at the time of his appearance.

This philosophy may be approached from three aspects. As religion, it is the practical doctrine of the true relation of man to the universe and the Divine Source of that Universe. It deals with the relation of man to God. As ethics, it is the practical doctrine of the true relation of man to all other men and things in the universe considered as individual beings. It deals with the inter-relations of the parts of the universe. As science, it is the practical knowledge of the forces acting in man and nature and of the laws of their action. As the Esoteric philosophy, it is the knowledge in the abstract of all the foregoing.

There is but little space in a paper which only purports to give a bird's eye view of the work of the Theosophical Movement to deal with the teachings of the Philosophy itself; but perhaps a sketch of its central doctrine may be attempted.

It is upon the truth of this fundamental teaching that Theosophy itself rests. Its actuality makes Theosophy—the direct knowledge of the Divine—possible or even thinkable.

This central teaching is as follows:—All beings, whether human, super-human, or sub-human, are, in essence, one with the Soul of the Universe. There is one Supreme Self; and all lesser selves are manifestations or aspects of that One. Each human being is therefore, in essence, Divine. Each can know his own divinity, each can become Divine in actuality as well as in essence.

The One Self is spoken of by Jesus as "the Father," a name by which he brought home to his disciples the close relation of the Self to Its emanated selves: and in saying, as he did, "I and my Father are one," he indicated that he himself had realised the presence of the One Self in himself. And when he says "My Father is greater than I," he knows that although he had realised his unity with the Self, he also knew that the Self transcended any of Its

manifested selves, however great. And in saying "I ascend unto my Father and your Father," he showed that he recognised the Divine in all beings even though they themselves were as yet in ignorance of it.

The Supreme Self, whose presence is first consciously realised after the human stage has been reached by the emanated selves, is One Omnipresent Life.

This Life is described by a Unitarian as "the Unseen Power behind the Universe, the Omnipotent, the Everlasting; the Energy by which all the hosts of worlds arise and have their being, that flashes in the shaft of light, that moves through the storm and pulses in the sunshine; the Living Energy by which, myriad-fold, life arises on this earth of ours, by which life struggles up into the regal faculty of man; the Universal, Everlasting, all energising Power to which there is no small and no great, which thrills in the petal of a flower no less than it sends its currents down the orbits of the vastest suns."

The writer of that description might have been a student of Buddhism, for in the teaching of Gautama the Buddha, this life is thus referred to:—"All things are made of One Essence, yet things are different according to the forms which they assume under different impressions. As they form themselves, so they act, and as they act so they are."

Sir Edwin Arnold when giving the Buddha's doctrines in *The Light of Asia* has this description:—

"This is its touch upon the blossomed rose,
The fashion of its hand-shaped lotus-leaves;
In dark soil and the silence of the seeds
The robe of Spring it weaves;

"This is its painting on the glorious clouds,
And these its emeralds on the peacock's train;
It hath its stations in the stars; its slaves
In lightning, wind, and rain.

"The ordered music of the marching orbs
It makes in viewless canopy of sky;
In deep abyss of earth it hides up gold,
Sards, sapphires, lazzuli."

In the Hindu *Bhagavat Gîtâ,* The Song of the Lord, the Self is thus made to speak:—

"From Me shineth the gathered glory of the suns which lighten all the world: from Me the moons draw silvery beams and fire fierce loveliness. I penetrate the clay and lend all shapes their living force. I am of all this boundless Universe the Father, Mother, Ancestor and Guard. I am alike for all. I am the Self seated deep in every creature's heart. I am the beginning, the life and the end of all existing things."

The Chinese Sage, Lâotsze, the Founder of Tâoism, spoke of the One Life in very similar terms. He calls it the Tâo. "The Tâo has no form, but It produced and nourished heaven and earth. It has no desires, but It causes the sun and moon to revolve. It has no name, but It affects the growth and maintenance of all things. It has Its root and ground of existence in Itself. Before there were heaven and earth It was. From It came all beings, from It the mysterious existence of God. It was before the Primordial Ether. By It all things are nourished."

The One Life is manifested to us as countless individual Lives —Being becomes Beings. Its activities are in accordance with Law, that is, with an unvarying order in action. That Law is the Will of the Self.

It may be considered from two aspects—as Cyclic Law and as the Law of Adjustment.

The inherent nature of the One Life is such that It manifests in periods of activity alternating with periods of rest. In the East It is graphically named The Great Breath, with Its regular outbreathings and inbreathings.

As with the One Life so with each of Its Lives. Every living being is subject to this law of alternation: all phenomena are governed by it.

Cycles in time, such as Day and Night, the lunar month, with the moon's phases, the year, with its seasons, and many other natural astronomical periods, are so well known that it is unnecessary to refer to them at length. The Life Cycles of living beings too are very evident. In the vegetable world the seed produces a plant, the plant a flower, the flower produces seed, and this again produces a plant.

NEW LIGHT ON THEOSOPHY.

"A Theosophist's Point of View," by Major James Albert Clark, president of the Theosophical Society, Washington, D. C., copyrighted by M. A. B. Clark, 913 M Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

The author, who is well known as a lecturer at the National Capital, Baltimore and elsewhere, found, as he states, a genuine desire in the questions put after each lecture, and on these inquiries he has built his context of 356 pages of brevier, thus giving the reader value for the price—one dollar the copy.

It is further stated that the work was not written for Theosophists, but for the "man on the street" who has heard just enough to wish to know more, and generally, his listeners at lectures have betrayed a uniformity of experience by stating "Theosophy as you teach it is not as we read it in the books."

This "Point of View" which forms the title is given as that of A Theosophist, thus limiting all conclusions to the author, and not to be considered as binding on the society. "It is not claimed," the author writes, "that it is truth absolute; it is truth as he discerns it. No better test of sincerity and fairness is known in the Theosophical estimate than one's willingness to submit his own views to a just comparison with others. This is his standing in court. On this he rests his case."

The 12 chapters seem to cover the main issues which pertain to the cult, and show a painstaking search. Meeting the occasional charge that there is agnosticism in the Second Postulate of the philosophy which sets some religious value on the unknown, the effort is reverently sustained throughout that the only God man can know is the divinity within.

The most thorough-going chapter deals with Reincarnation, and on lines not heretofore encountered in the treatises of the society. This is explained by the fact that the author having shown a scientific cast of mind in other directions apart from study of Theosophy, has investigated on new lines.

"Karma," the law of cause and effect, which is the broadest generalization in the system of thought compels rebirth, and the purpose is the Perfectibility of Man.

"The Genesis of Man"—differing from the traditional single pair, is in line with the conclusions of many of our advanced archaeologists which they label the "new theory," but which the author, by proof from ancient records, declares to be the oldest wisdom.

"The Psychic Powers Latent in Man" will arouse the antagonism of the Spiritualists and the Christian Scientists, but the attacks are not vindictive nor aggressive. They appeal to the reason, and admit the possibility of further revelations from the unexplained laws of nature.

"A Theosophist's Attitude to Christianity" will draw fire from the strictly orthodox and all upholders of creed and dogma, but the trend of reasoning is in accord with liberal Christianity.

"The Scientific Aspect of Theosophy" will awaken a lively interest in those who have always intuitively felt that the ancients knew more than they have been credited with.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

Founded by H. P. BLAVATSKY at New York in 1875.

The Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics.*

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *Path* to tread in this."

There are no dues.

The expenses of the Theosophical Society in America are met by voluntary contributions, which should be sent to A. H. Spencer, Treasurer T. S. in A., Box 1584, New York, N. Y.

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S. A., P. O. Box 1584, New York.